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SIPDIS

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TAGS: [PREL](#) [IS](#) [MU](#)
SUBJECT: OMANI FM SPEAKS OUT ON JERUSALEM

CLASSIFIED BY: L. Victor Hurtado, DCM; REASON: 1.4(B), (D)

¶1. (U) According to press reports on May 24, Yusuf bin Alawi bin Abdallah, Minister Responsible for Foreign Affairs, rejected Israeli attempts to make Jerusalem a Jewish city. While in Damascus for the Organization of the Islamic Conference, he publicly reacted to Israeli PM Netanyahu's statements on Jerusalem saying that the international community and Islamic countries should work together to end Israel's aggressive policy. Bin Alawi stressed that Netanyahu's statements are not convincing and will not alter Jerusalem's position in Islamic civilization.

¶2. (C) Comment: Bin Alawi's statements appear to give voice to a hardening of the Arab lines with Israel, as Oman reacts to the policies of the new Israeli government. However, in the past, the Sultan has permitted bin Alawi to express positions beyond the bonds of Oman's official positions, and this may be an example of using that approach to manage domestic constituents. On the other hand, during the Ambassador's farewell call on the minister, bin Alawi expressed a profound frustration with the state of Israeli-Palestinian affairs to a degree not previously experienced. In this light, bin Alawi's comments in Damascus represent a personal dimension. End Comment.

GRAPPO